



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **Festival of Lights to Bring Thousands to Downtown Riverside for Holiday Cheer**

*Riverside's signature event outside Mission Inn attracts visitors from across Southern California*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The 21st Annual Riverside Festival of Lights kicks off this Friday (11/29) with holiday vendors and family activities starting at noon and the magical switch-on ceremony and fireworks hosted by The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

The annual event, which illuminates downtown Riverside and lifts the spirits of residents and visitors alike during the holiday season, features more than 3.5 million twinkling lights and spectacular fireworks.

The switch-on ceremony, which brings tens of thousands of people onto downtown streets in and around the Main Street Mall, represents the culmination of months of work by The Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce and the Festival of Lights Committee, which is made up of community volunteers and local businesses.

“The Festival of Lights is always one of the highlights of the year in Riverside, and this year will be no exception,” Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “I look forward to joining with thousands of Riverside residents to officially ring in the holiday season in what has become a great Riverside tradition.”

Following the switch-on ceremony, the Festival of Lights continues through January 4, 2014, closing only on Christmas Day. As the largest holiday celebration in the region, the Festival has become a holiday tradition for families, visitors and groups alike.

Attractions include millions of holiday lights, animatronic displays of iconic holiday scenes, a 32-foot tree with LED lights, nightly live entertainment and an outdoor ice skating rink on Main Street between University and Mission Inn Avenues. Festival-goers can grab a cup of hot cocoa and warm, sugared donuts, purchase a one-of-a-kind present or dine at a unique restaurant.

Back by popular demand is the Artisans Collective, a weekly market designed to embrace local artistry that is open Thursdays-Sundays through Dec. 21. Stroll down Main Street, between University Avenue

and 9th Street, and discover a creative marketplace of hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind art, jewelry, ceramics, sculpture, paintings, mosaics, garments, stationery and art demonstrations.

The Riverside Festival of Lights allows everyone, regardless of age, to be filled with wonder and anticipation of the magic of the holidays. Don't miss your opportunity to be part of this wonderful Riverside tradition!

For more information -- [www.RiversideFestivalofLights.com](http://www.RiversideFestivalofLights.com)